

# **Om nom nom nom**

Written by dreamkatcha. Any related videos, as always, can be found on my YouTube channel.

None of this would have been possible without the fantastic resources generously provided by immensely talented emulator authors, and communities such as Hall of Light, Lemon Amiga, Lemon 64, World of Spectrum, Moby Games, World of Longplays and Recorded Amiga Games. Thank you for your tireless dedication to preserving the history of gaming.

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Often the joy of gaming transpires from unravelling the entanglement of its multilayered, metaphysical concepts. Take 'Cookie' for example; it's an advanced cookie construction simulator, and also features the Cookie Monster from Sesame Street. You could interpret its title either way, therein lies the genius!

You what?, the Cookie Monster and Oscar the Grouch are two separate entities?

...shut up!



Let loose in 1993 as a simple, public domain diversion for Amigans, Richard Langford's title is a homagey remake of the original Spectrum game developed by the Stamper brothers, published in 1983 under their trading name, Ultimate - Play the Game. Ultimate went on to become Rare Ltd in 1986, and in 2007 Chris and Tim Stamper left the company. That's my potted history of the illustrious softco in a single sentence. See I *can* be concise when I want to be.

As a re-imagining it's almost identical in terms of mechanics, updated with higher resolution, multi-coloured graphics, yet also boasts a much more pocket-friendly price of zippy-de-do-da. Originally it would have lightened your load by £5.50

for the duel 16k/48k cassette tape edition, or £14.95 for the ROM cartridge.

Playing as Charlie the Chef it's your task to guide a menagerie of wayward anthropomorphic ingredients into your mixing bowl to tick off the steps required by a recipe. The lineup includes Mixed Peel, Chunky Chocolate, Crafty Cheese, Sneaky Sugar and Colonel Custard.

As the 'story' goes, their respective noses have been put out of joint because you only ever let them out of their pantry prison when you intend to bake, grill, boil, or fry them alive. That can't be good for anyone's self-esteem, let alone raw ingredients with so little scope or hope for a fulfilling existence.



**Charlie the chef keeps all the ingredients locked away in the pantry, only letting them out when he wants to cook them!**

**Naturally this leaves them a wee bit miffed.**

**So! As soon as they can, the ingredients dash out of the pantry dragging all the sorts of nasties found in the bottom of drawers and cupboards with them to escape and run wild.**

**Poor old Charlie! He has to daze the ingredients with his flour bombs and knock them into the mixing bowl, because if they go into the dustbins they will be eaten by the bin monster who doesn't care one little bit where he throws any of his rubbish.**

**Should any rubbish or nasties get into the cake mix then the 'ingredients needed' counter will increase, and Charlie will have to work quicker and faster if he's going to bake his cake.**

To put the ingredients out of their misery you shoot them with bags of flour to stun and slow them down. Then redirect their trajectory by knocking them into the bowl. You'll need to dunk a predetermined number of ingredients per level in order to progress to the next (as displayed on the front of the bowl).



Complicating matters, a number of rogue elements shaken loose from the pantry draws (nuts, bolts, and screws) circulate the kitchen attempting to spoil your mix. If they end up in the bowl you'll need to gather up more bona fide ingredients, I suppose to counteract the effects of the metal debris.

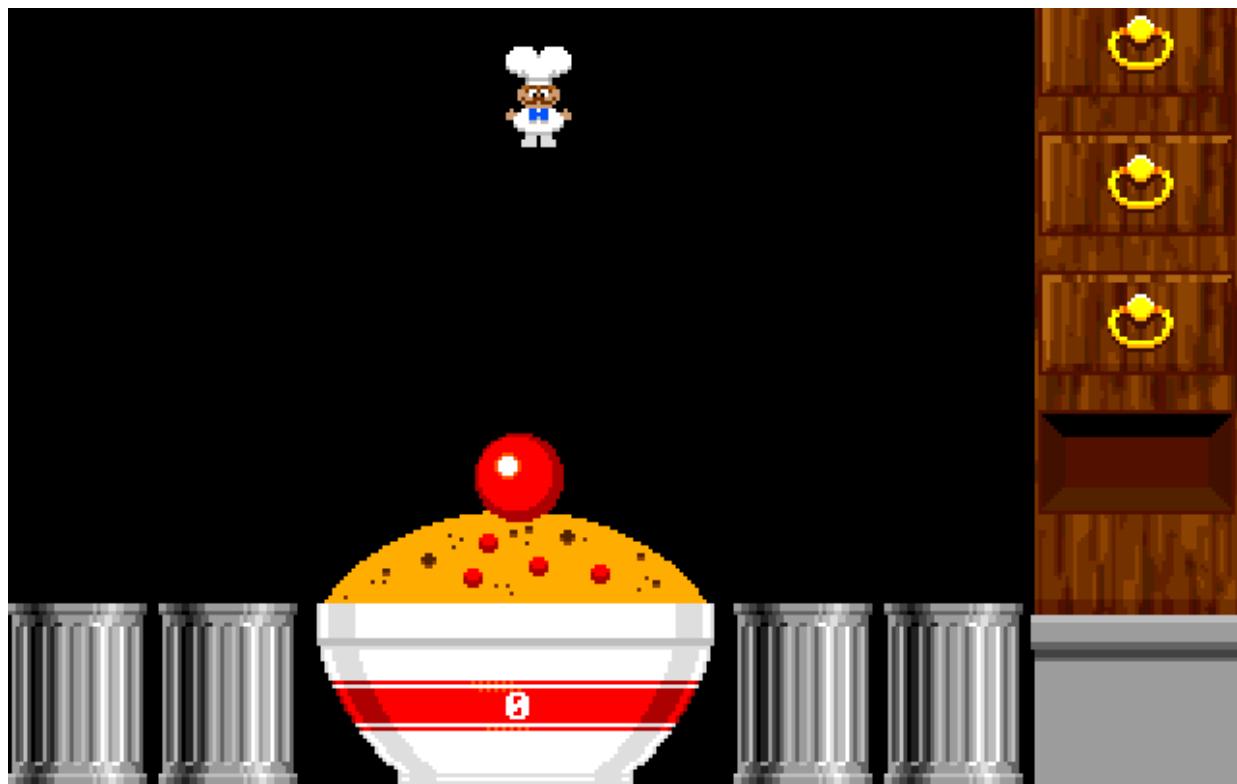
I can't foresee any problems there, but you might like to try shooting these straight into the bins instead to swerve any loss of points, time, and lives. Watch out for the Grouch who lives in these and can be relied upon to hurl junk such as fish bones and grotty empty food cans back into orbit. In all versions, he looks less Grouchy and more like a seal than a bin monster. Well, on the *title* screen and box cover anyway. In the character list - where he joins the roll call alongside Jimmy Nail - and in the game itself, he certainly wouldn't be asked for ID on the way into Sesame Street's former Astoria studios in Queens.





What's that? We're baking a *cake*, not cookies? Well, what the flipping 'eck has the title got to do with anything then?

It's true; the back of the box confirms this, and when you complete the challenge the mixture rises out of the bowl as it cooks, just like a cake. Cookies don't expand in the same way because they contain no yeast. It's not explained how the cake is cooking without any heat and in a mixing bowl, though we'll let that go because pointing it out would be pedantic and nerdy, and we're all too cool for that nonsense.



Cookie was well received in 1983 and is still fondly remembered amongst a small troupe of fans today. Enough to warrant another remake in 2017, this time for the C64 and by Andy Noble. It's considered to be a very faithful conversion, except for the difficulty curve. This steadily climbs in the original as the number of ingredients captured increases and the attack patterns deviate to keep you on your toes.



While it looks too primitive to be much fun, it's actually surprisingly addictive when you factor in the Space Invaders style rapid-fire action, enemy-dodging mechanic, and Robotron controls. Juggling the rogue kitchen inhabitants will keep you entertained for, ooh, *minutes*. Until the next time you have a few to spare.